

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

DATE: JUNE 21, 2012

ITEM: REVIEW OF THE DRAFT CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT AND
SUPPORTING TECHNICAL REPORT FOR THE DRAFT 2035
GENERAL PLAN

LOCATION: CITY-WIDE

CONSULTANTS: TERRA NOVA PLANNING AND RESEARCH, INC., IN
CONJUNCTION WITH CRM TECH – DANIEL BALLESTER,
ARCHAEOLOGIST, & BAI “TOM” TANG, PRINCIPAL
INVESTIGATOR/HISTORIAN

BACKGROUND:

This study session is to introduce the Historic Preservation Commission to the draft Cultural Resources element (Attachment 1) prepared as a part of the 2035 General Plan update and to recommend approval of the supporting technical analysis which will be included as an appendix of the Draft Environmental Impact Report supporting the General Plan. The information identified in the Cultural Resources element is based upon the “Cultural Resources Technical Analysis” (Attachment 2) prepared by CRM TECH on behalf of the City’s General Plan consultant, Terra Nova Planning and Research, Inc. The technical analysis provides an overview of all cultural resources within the General Plan boundary area, consisting of the current City limits and Sphere of Influence, and contains recommendations for identifying and managing potentially significant cultural resources.

OVERVIEW:

The General Plan is a comprehensive policy document which serves as a blueprint for all of La Quinta and its annexable areas, called the Sphere of Influence (SOI). The General Plan functions as both a legal document and policy guide for decision-making. The goals, policies, and programs identified within the General Plan document are shaped by both community interests and State law.

Each component of the General Plan, called an “element,” focuses on a specific topic. The La Quinta General Plan will contain five themed chapters which are further divided into a number of different elements, such as the Cultural Resources element. Other elements include Land Use, Traffic and Circulation, Housing, Sustainable Community, Natural Resources, Economic Development, Noise, and Public Safety. Each element has goals, policies, and programs that affect how development occurs and decisions are made in the City. The Cultural Resource element, for example, contains the goals,

policies, and programs that relate to historic preservation, providing policies and programs for the responsible management and monitoring of such resources.

The General Plan is also a hierarchical document. As the guiding blueprint of the City, it must be more broad and comprehensive than other adopted plans or policy documents. For example, the Cultural Resources Element in the General Plan identifies the goals, policies, and programs that relate to the protection of significant historical, archaeological, and paleontological resources. These broad policies are designed to guide more specific actions or programs, such as the Historic Preservation Commission's annual work program.

UNDERSTANDING THE ELEMENTS:

All of the General Plan elements begin with a section identifying their purpose along with a description of any facts and findings required for identification under State law. This is typically followed by an identification of the available facilities and resources associated with that particular element. For example, the Cultural Resources Element presents a brief overview of the City's historic context followed by an overview of the known cultural resources in La Quinta. The element concludes with the most important and pertinent section- the official goals, policies, and programs to be implemented.

THE CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT:

The draft Cultural Resources Element has been drafted to provide a general overview of the City's known cultural resources, to establish goals and policies for the Historic Preservation Commission, and to continue the ongoing programs which reflect those goals and policies, such as the requirement for phase I surveys on undeveloped land, to maintain a database of known eligible historic resources, and to be proactive in the protection of cultural resources. The element identifies an overview of all lands in the City and Sphere of Influence which have been previously surveyed for archaeological sites and of the City's paleontological context. The element also identifies the element's relationship to Title 7 in the Municipal Code in regards to Historic Preservation. The information presented in the element is intended to serve as an overview and guide, rather than a source for site-specific data.

CULTURAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL REPORT:

A Cultural Resources Technical Report was prepared by CRM Tech for purposes of environmental review and to provide supporting information for the draft 2035 General Plan. CRM Tech conducted a citywide study of the entire General Plan planning area, including a records search, historical research, Native American and local historian consultations, as well as field reconnaissance. The report identifies the regional historic context, provides an overview of La Quinta's history, a summary of existing conditions, input from local historians including Native American sources, and provides an overview of existing management programs.

The report in turn provides a series of recommendations, which the Historic Preservation Commission should consider (Pg.25). These recommendations are consistent with the current policies and procedures of the Historic Preservation Commission and consist of the following:

- Pursue government-to-government consultation with pertinent Native American representatives and tribal organizations, as determined by the NAHC, in order to comply with the mandate of Senate Bill 18 on general plans or specific plans (OPR 2005:10-18).
- Establish and maintain channels of routine consultation with the Eastern Information Center at the University of California, Riverside, and local historic preservation groups such as the La Quinta Historical Society, the Coachella Valley History Museum, and the Coachella Valley Archaeological Society.
- Require all proposed project sites to be surveyed by a qualified archaeologist, historian, and/or architectural historian, as appropriate, to identify any potential cultural resources that may be affected, unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that such survey is unnecessary.
- Maintain and expand as necessary the existing historical resources inventory to provide a comprehensive and up-to-date register of known cultural resources; maintain and update at regular intervals the citywide historical resources survey to reflect current status of cultural resources and potential cultural resources and to include nontraditional property types; establish guidelines and procedures to implement the landmark and district program outlined in the Historic Preservation Ordinance.
- Encourage property owners and other citizens to nominate qualified properties to the city's inventory system and/or federal or state registers; provide citizens with all incentives, assistance, and opportunities for historic preservation that are available through various federal, state, or city programs.
- Implement a systematic program to advance public awareness of the city's heritage, generate broad support for its preservation, and enhance community pride in the city.

CONCLUSION:

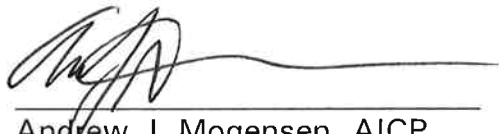
This study session review is to inform the Historic Preservation Commission of the efforts regarding the preparation of the draft Cultural Resources Element of the 2035 General Plan update. Staff is also seeking a recommendation in support of the findings and aforementioned recommendations identified within the Cultural Resources Technical Report for the draft 2035 General Plan Update.

Staff is currently proceeding with the finalization of the General Plan document, including the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR). It is expected that the draft General Plan and General Plan EIR will be ready for public review and comment on July 6, 2012 and that public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council will occur in September and October. The General Plan EIR will be released for a 45 day public comment period, during which Staff plans to conduct a community outreach open house event at City Hall on July 11, 2012 in order to present the draft General Plan and EIR to the City's residents and businesses.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Historic Preservation Commission adopt a Minute Motion accepting the "Cultural Resources Technical Report," for the General Plan Update, as prepared by CRM Tech dated July 8, 2010, supporting the report's findings and recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council. No formal action is required regarding the draft Cultural Resources Element.

Prepared by:



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Principal Planner

Attachments: 1. Draft 2035 General Plan Cultural Resources Element
 2. Cultural Resources Technical Report for the General Plan Update